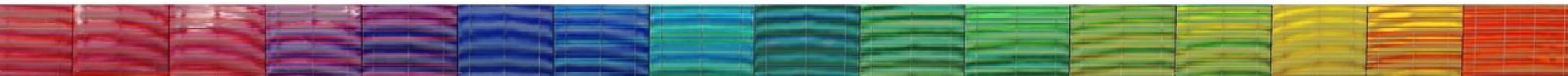


How are some people inspired by their religious faith?

Ages 7–9

This slideshow supports the activities on pp. 15–20 of *Inspiring RE: inspirational people*, edited by Fiona Moss, published by RE Today.

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What people do



How can you identify the faith of each person?
Do you need more than a photo?



What these people do



What is surprising?

What is interesting?

What is inspiring about these people?

What questions would you like to ask these people?

Speculate: in what ways does faith make a difference in these people's lives?

What these people say

Case study 1



Reverend Kate Bottley

is a vicar in the Church of England.

We asked her some questions:

Who inspires you in your faith?

As a vicar, she ran a local church and its parish council. She led baptisms, weddings and funerals, and she visited families at home, as well as schools, care homes and workplaces, helping people in need and offering support and guidance wherever people needed it. She became well known overnight when a flash-mob video of her performing a wedding ceremony went viral online.

Since then she has appeared on Channel 4's *Gogglebox*, *Newsnight*, *The One Show* and *The Holy Bible*. She has her own show on Radio 2, presents *Songs of Praise* and was a columnist on *Newsnight*. She writes for newspapers like *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph*, plus the *Faith Times* and various other publications.

Is the Christian life always easy or is it sometimes a struggle?

Of course it isn't easy. I've never met a person of faith who found faith easy, not all the time. It's called faith, it's not called sure, so that means that there are doubts, challenges and frustrations.

What is your favourite Bible story, and why?

Rhoda, who answers the door to Peter after he's released from prison, she's the grandmother and gets to excited she forgot to let him in. I empathise with her enthusiasm (see p. 17). But I also love the Samaritan woman at the well, she's a feminist icon.

How does being a Christian make a difference to your everyday life (as well as being your job...)?

It helps me to make decisions, it fills me with joy, it makes me question and reflect, but at times it's immensely frustrating.

What is the best thing about being a Christian?

That's a bit of an odd question! Best thing? I suppose it's knowing I'm loved, it's also the hardest thing because it means I am called to love others.

You were on *Gogglebox*, a programme for older people. If Jesus was on *Gogglebox* or *Goggleboxers*, who would he be with? What do you think he would like, and why?

I'm not sure he would be on *Gogglebox* with anyone, but I guess if he was, it would have to be with the 'dislike Jesus loved' (we can't be sure if that was James or John, to be fair) or perhaps he'd invite someone in who was lonely and in need of companionship and a comfy sofa.

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Case studies 2 and 3



BEAR GRYLLS is an adventurer.

He was in the British special forces before becoming a TV presenter and Chief Scout (2008-18). He supports the Alpha Course, which introduces thousands of people to the Christian faith every year. Bear's real name is Edward, but his sister called him 'Bear' when he was just a week old. He says that at a young child he never questioned God. He just knew God existed and it felt like God was his friend.

Bear talks about the difference between religion and faith. He says, 'Religion never said, "You come to you can feel smart and proper and steady and religious"... Faith is about finding life and joy and peace... Christianity is not about religion, it's about faith, about being held, about being forgiven. It's about finding joy and finding home.'

Bear explains what he means when he says faith is about 'being held.' He says, 'It's about being strengthened. It's about having a backbone run through you from the Person who made you. It's about being able to climb the biggest mountains in the world with the Person who made them.'

He says that he does not go to church very often because he is away from home such a lot. He says he clings to simple things like this quote from the Bible: 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me' (Philippians 4:12, NCV). He also remembers the verse from the prophet Isaiah in the Bible, who describes God, saying 'I am holding you by your right hand.' The same goes on 'I, the Lord your God... I say to you, Don't be afraid; I am here to help you' (Isaiah 41:12, TLB).

Bear talks about how his faith comforts and supports him when he faces difficult situations. He says he tries to keep his faith simple, based on the idea that 'Jesus is unchanging and we are forgiven.'¹

1. Pappas, C. (2017) 'Theology: How Faith and Hope are Related', <http://www.biblestudytools.com/devotionals/365-days-of-bible-verse-reading/2017/07/20/faith-and-hope-are-related/>.
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MARTHA COLLISON

was in Year 12 and doing her A levels when she took part in *The Great British Bake Off* and reached the quarter-finals.

She is an ambassador for 'Bread', a Christian aid charity, and leads its annual 'Big Bake' fundraising appeal. Martha said, 'I see it as my way to express my Christian faith and help others at the same time. When I'm baking in Britain someone somewhere else, a long way away, will benefit. That makes me feel committed to them, it gives me a stake in their well-being even though we'll probably never meet.'

Martha is also part of the Bread for the World (see www.breadfortheworld.org.uk). This supports women who have had difficulties in their lives, or who have been badly treated by others. They get a chance to learn new skills in baking and set themselves up with work so that they can have better lives.

Case study 4

CHANDA VYAS

is a Hindu priest – the first female Hindu priest in the UK.



She is a mother, grandmother and, as well as being a priest, has worked as Community Opportunity Officer at Leicester City Council, helping the elderly, people with mental health issues and people with learning disabilities. She says, 'We should treat everybody equally regardless of their race, gender, disabilities, sexuality, age, etc. We can put it into policy, but we should all put this into practice too.'

Chanda grew up in a Hindu family, her father served as a priest and Chanda helped out in different temples during lots of religious festivals. As she watched her father and other priests, she saw that their service allowed them to be both closer to God and to support their communities. She wanted to be able to do that too. Chanda believes that religion provides people with guidance, understanding, meaning and a focus for life, believing that God is by her side in the journey called life.

She loves being present and involved in the lives of individuals and families. She blesses the births of newborn babies. She holds wedding ceremonies all around the world. She blesses new homes. She carries out puja (worship rituals) and bhakti (ritual storytelling) at temples, schools and community and day centres. She also conducts funeral services, as well as comforting people during times of sadness and loss.

She says, 'I just want to be there to support people in good and bad times.'

She says that being the priest for the wedding of her daughter was wonderful. It was very emotional and made her feel very blessed, being both the mother and the priest. She hopes to carry on supporting and guiding people in all situations. She also hopes that more women will follow their dreams, ignoring criticism. She says, 'In my experience, some people have

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Which quotes could be said by non-religious people?

Which quotes could be said by religious people?

Which could be said by either group?

How do you know?

Comparing ways of living



Bear Grylls

Dad
Doesn't often go to church
adventurer
climbs mountains



Chanda Vyas

religious

on TV
TV presenter
Christian

God
and fully
religion is
a comfort

Woman
Priest
Do Weddings
and
funerals

Mum and
Granny

Hindu

Goes to church
lots

Funny

Mum

Choose three people to create a Venn diagram for.

Fill in words and actions that these people say and do, and see if there is any overlap between any or all of them.

**Revd
Kate Bottley**



Emerging

- Ask questions about what Christians/Hindus might do to show their faith.
- Give examples of how some Christians/Hindus put their faith into action.

Expected

- Describe two things that a Christian/Hindu does to show their faith, making connections to a belief, teaching or story from their tradition.
- Give some reasons why Christians and Hindus help other people, noting similarities and differences where there are any.
- Give some examples about how being part of a faith community can be both inspiring and challenging for some people.

Exceeding

- Give evidence and examples of a variety of ways in which some Christians and Hindus are inspired and inspiring.
- Consider and weigh up the value of faith, enthusiasm, courage, service and worship in the lives of some Christians/Hindus, and share ideas of their own on how much these values are relevant or valuable to others outside those communities.

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